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4-26-1988

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### Recommended Citation

University Marketing and Communications, "04/26/1988 - Special Olympics" (1988). 1988. 184.  
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STUDENT HOMETOWN NEWS BUREAU  
MEDIA RELEASE

EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY Charleston, Illinois • Office of University Relations (217) 581-5981

88-102

April 26, 1988

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

SPECIAL OLYMPICS

By: Gretchen Ives  
Student Hometown News Bureau

CHARLESTON, IL--Athletes of a special kind will be competing once again at Eastern Illinois University in the annual Special Olympics, April 29.

"For over ten years, Eastern has been sponsoring the Special Olympics for this district," said Larry Akenbrand, Special Olympics meet director.

The Special Olympics district is comprised of Clark, Coles, Cumberland and Edgar counties.

The Special Olympics parade will begin at 9:30 a.m., followed

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## SPECIAL OLYMPICS

by ceremonies and the Special Olympics oath. The competition will begin at 10 a.m., said Akenbrand.

Eastern not only provides facilities for the Olympics, but also provides the volunteers who make the day possible.

Volunteers from Eastern's physical education department are officials for the events involving running and jumping.

Carnival-type games are provided for the Special Olympians between the main events. The carnival games are officiated by the volunteers from the recreation department.

Students from Eastern's special education department have the important support role of being huggers and runners.

"Huggers meet the Olympians at the finish line and give them a hug," Akenbrand added.

As runners, the volunteers escort the winners to the award stand.

Everyone at Eastern gets involved, including students, faculty and staff.

"Special Olympics is a learning experience for the volunteers. They learn that these people have the same drives and wishes that everyone else does. Something that is often not realized having not been around them," Akenbrand said.

"People get a lot of satisfaction when they get involved. Some students will be coming back for their third year to help," he added.

Diane Eiserman, 21, is one such volunteer. The 1984 graduate

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SPECIAL OLYMPICS

of Libertyville High School is a senior Physical Education major at Eastern.

Eiserman got involved with the Special Olympics when she was required to attend for a class. She kept returning because she enjoyed working with the Special Olympians.

"They (the Olympians) are very excited about being able to participate. They are very affectionate and like to give and receive hugs," she said.

Another volunteer who will be returning for his third year is Tim Borries, 21, the son of Mr & Mrs. Albert Borries of Tuscola.

The 1985 graduate of Tuscola Community High School is a junior Physical Education major. Like Eiserman he got involved with the Special Olympics and came back.

"These Olympians give 100 percent all the time, unlike other kids who may give up or just not give their all in everything they do. I like working with them," said Borries.